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**Maryland State Dental Association Foundation, Maryland Foundation of Dentistry
Receive Major Grants to Continue Serving Most Vulnerable Marylanders**

Maryland Community Health Resources Commission grants nearly \$75,000 to the two organizations

COLUMBIA-The Maryland State Dental Association Charitable and Educational Foundation ([MSDAF](#)) and the Maryland Foundation of Dentistry ([MFD](#)) Donated Dental Services (DDS) will be continuing their work to help provide free dental care to Maryland's underserved and most vulnerable residents thanks to grants from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC). Both grants are designed to assist the organizations in their ongoing efforts to provide dental care services during the COVID pandemic.

The current global health pandemic has created a need to increase infection control measures for the [MSDAF's](#) Missions of Mercy to operate. The Foundation will use its \$49,900 grant from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission to purchase equipment and make adaptations to current protocols to reduce infection risk among those seeking care at its Mission of Mercy clinics held across the state. Maryland Missions of Mercy (MOM) are gatherings of volunteer dental professionals who, along with a volunteer staff of several hundred, hold free, one- or two-day dental clinics at locations around the state. Since the first clinic was held in Western Maryland in 2010, MOM clinics have provided nearly \$20 million in free dental care to Maryland's most vulnerable residents.

The [Maryland Foundation of Dentistry](#) received a \$24,000 grant from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission and will use these funds to provide intensive case management coordination between MFD applicants and MFD volunteer dentists. It will also be used to help pay for dental prostheses for clients. Additionally, the funding will be used to update the MFD's computers, remote office equipment and technology, to help the MFD staff effectively and seamlessly support clients, while working remotely.

"Access to dental care is a fundamental human need that many people suffer without. Without this help from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission far too many of our most vulnerable residents would go without the critical care that not only brings relief to the mouth, but helps identify other issues and concerns throughout a patient's body," said Dr. Diane Romaine, president of the MSDAF. "We are so grateful for these resources so our dentists across the state can continue to care for all Marylanders."

"The Maryland Foundation of Dentistry appreciates the trust that the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission has shown in us to continue providing necessary services to some of our most vulnerable Marylanders. This funding is crucial as we navigate a new COVID-19 world with our clients and the dentists who provide these invaluable services at no cost to their patients," said Marissa Tisch, Executive Director of the MFD.

"The Maryland Community Health Resources Commission is thrilled to award these two COVID grants to the Maryland State Dental Association Foundation and Maryland Foundation of Dentistry," commented

Mark Luckner, CHRC Executive Director. “We commend both organizations in their efforts to provide access to important dental care services as our state responds to the impact of COVID.”

Expanding access to dental care services has been a priority of the CHRC since its inception. Over the years, the CHRC has awarded 44 grants totaling \$8.8 million to support dental access programs. These programs have provided access to dental services to nearly 70,000 children and adults, most of whom are low-income and impacted by multiple Social Determinants of Health.

The [Maryland State Dental Association](#) and [Foundation](#) members have helped to support and provide care at Mission of Mercy events and through Donated Dental Services from the Eastern Shore to Western Maryland. The dentists who provide these services free-of-charge also help educate patients and raise awareness about oral health inequities. In addition, Maryland dentists provide care through ER diversion programs, Community Dental Health Coordinator (Community Health Worker) programs, and programs to help children, the handicapped and disabled, and the elderly.

“As dental practices have slowly reopened, we’ve learned a great deal about the necessary protocols and infection control measures that we need to incorporate into our Missions of Mercy to ensure the safety of the patients, dentists, staff and volunteers,” said Eric Biagioli, Executive Director of the MSDAF. “This grant will help us implement these critical measures as we look to continue serving the most vulnerable of our population.”

Missions of Mercy and donated dental services to Maryland’s most vulnerable populations have been a key component of the state’s dentists’ efforts to ensure that all Marylanders have access to the best dental care possible. While dentist offices were closed except for emergencies and MOM clinics canceled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, dentists have been concerned that more people are unable to access dental care. Ensuring that patients and staff are safe with the proper equipment at MOM clinics and providing the necessary coordination between MFD, patients and dentists for donated dental services, in part due to the MCHRC grant, will allow dental care for the most vulnerable Marylanders to continue.

Both the MSDAF and the MFD also accept private donations that allow the organizations to continue helping underserved and vulnerable Marylanders. Gifts to the MSDAF can be made here: <https://www.msdaf.org/give>. Gifts to the MFD can be made here: <https://paypal.me/mfdsmiles1989>.

[About the Maryland State Dental Association Charitable and Educational Foundation \(MSDAF\)](#)

The MSDAF is dedicated to advancing the oral healthcare of the public by supporting outreach programs that offer dental care and oral health education to underserved populations. The MSDA Foundation believes that all Marylanders, regardless of barriers to care, should be the beneficiaries of the finest dental treatment. The MSDA membership is the majority of Maryland’s oral health care givers and providers of dental treatment and is dedicated to improve access to needed oral healthcare and help to eliminate health disparities. The MSDA Foundation serves Marylanders and the dental community through:

- Support of the Missions of Mercy clinics in bringing free dental care to thousands of underserved people
- Donations to programs such as National Children’s Health Month and oral cancer runs
- Scholarships to dental students who have a proven history and promising future in charitable dentistry
- Emergency Department assistance to ensure proper treatment of dental emergencies
- Education programs to instruct dentists how to provide care to underprivileged populations

[About the Maryland Foundation of Dentistry Donated Dental Services](#)

The Maryland Foundation of Dentistry (MFD) Donated Dental Services (DDS) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) formed in 1989 by caring dentists willing to help underserved Marylanders access dental care. The program’s mission is to provide comprehensive dental care for adults living in Maryland who are physically and/or

mentally fragile, including the elderly and veterans. The MFD brings as many people as possible to a state of good dental health, thereby improving their overall health. To learn more about the Maryland Foundation of Dentistry visit <https://mfd-dds.org/>.

ABOUT Maryland Community Health Resources Commission

The Maryland Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC) was created by the Maryland General Assembly in 2005 to expand access to health care services in underserved communities in Maryland. The CHRC is an independent commission operating within the Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DHMH), whose 11 members are appointed by the Governor. Since its inception, the CHRC has awarded 266 grants totaling \$77.7 million, supporting programs in every jurisdiction of the state. These programs have collectively served more than 488,000 Marylanders, and grants awarded by the CHRC have enabled grantees to leverage \$28.4 million in additional federal and private/non-profit resources.

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